United Nations A/C.1/57/PV.12

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

First Committee
12th meeting
Tuesday, 15 October 2002, at 10 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Kiwanuka ..... (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 57, 58 and 60 to 73 (*continued*)

Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security items

The Chairman: As reflected in document A/C.1/57/CRP.2, this morning's meeting has been allocated for delegations to make statements regarding other weapons of mass destruction and outer space. Delegations are also invited to introduce draft resolutions.

I see that we have with us today our junior colleagues from the Disarmament Fellowship Programme. On behalf of the Committee, I would like to warmly welcome them, and I sincerely hope that the work of this Committee will provide invaluable experience and training to the next generation of disarmament experts.

Mr. Cappagli (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Argentine Republic would like first and foremost to reaffirm its firm commitment to disarmament and international security as indispensable prerequisites for making possible a peaceful and constructive relationship among nations and for promoting their development. In this context, it is of particular importance that we attain the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, which the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) is called upon to carry out. This, however, is a difficult undertaking which implies the destruction of huge arsenals and requires substantial financial contributions. It also requires the political will of the international community to attain the crucial objective of the universality of the Convention. In that connection, allow me to state that my Government is delighted at the recent accession of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the Convention, which brings to 146 the number of States parties that are bound by the Convention.

The OPCW must also ensure the attainment of another objective of the Convention: non-proliferation. In many instances, this endeavour involves the avoidance of the use of widely available chemicals, often used also in agriculture, to make sure that these are not diverted for non-peaceful purposes. This is a particularly important undertaking at a time when the international community is threatened by terrorism, which has shown itself ready to resort to any weapon of mass destruction to sow hatred and destruction. By the same token, the preamble to the Convention is clear that the achievements of chemistry are to be used solely and exclusively for the benefit of humankind. This highlights the importance of the task being carried out by the OPCW, and once again emphasizes the significance of international cooperation to give developing countries the human and technological resources to engage in chemical activities for purposes not prohibited by that Convention.

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Another major task incumbent upon nations under the Convention is to make sure that national legislation be adapted to facilitate the monitoring and punishment of violations of the Convention.

This year, the OPCW has endured a crisis that has severely curtailed its activities and threatened its future. Fortunately, with the cooperation of all States parties, it was possible to overcome the crisis and restore the climate of harmony and cooperation that must prevail among all its members, and between them and the Technical Secretariat, to ensure that the organization's goals are attained.

We are delighted indeed that States parties have placed their confidence in an Argentine diplomat, Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter, to head the Technical Secretariat during this new phase that we have now entered. We are certain that the new Director-General, who has demonstrated his personal and professional qualifications over a long career involving issues of international peace and security, will lend renewed dynamism to the organization and will see to it that the Technical Secretariat develops its work in constant consultation and understanding with all member States. We wish the Director-General and the entire staff of the Technical Secretariat resounding success in discharging their duties.

Allow me to conclude my statement by expressing the hope that the strides achieved in all the realms contemplated by the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction will continue to put an end to the threat posed by these terrible weapons of mass destruction to international peace and security.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Belarus, who will introduced draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.5.

Mr. Rybakov (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The delegation of the Republic of Belarus has submitted for consideration by the First Committee draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.5, under agenda item 58, "Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons: report of the Conference on Disarmament". The delegation of the Republic of Belarus has the honour to inform the Committee and all delegations that, as of today, the draft resolution is also sponsored by Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

The draft resolution proposes that the Conference on Disarmament be the main body for considering this issue. The adoption of the draft resolution would not have any financial implications. The text contains a reference to all previous General Assembly resolutions on the question of the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons. It also takes note of paragraph 77 of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly and emphasizes the determination of Member States to prevent the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction that have characteristics comparable in destructive effect to those of weapons of mass destruction identified in the definition of weapons of mass destruction adopted by the United Nations in 1948.

In the operative part of the draft resolution, the Assembly would reaffirm that effective measures should be taken to prevent the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction. The General Assembly would further request the Conference on Disarmament, without prejudice to further overview of its agenda, to keep the matter under review as appropriate with a view to making, when necessary, recommendations on undertaking specific negotiations on identified types of such weapons. All States would be called upon to give favourable consideration to those recommendations of the Conference immediately following their submission.

The General Assembly would further request the Conference on Disarmament to report the results of any consideration of the matter in its annual reports to the General Assembly and would decide to include in the provisional agenda of its sixtieth session the item entitled "Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons: report of the Conference on Disarmament".

Similar resolutions have twice, in 1996 and in 1999, been adopted by the General Assembly without a vote. The Republic of Belarus hopes that this draft resolution too will be supported by all delegations and will be adopted without a vote.

Mr. Hu Xiaodi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First of all, I would like on behalf of the Chinese delegation

to express our serious concern at the grave explosions that have taken place in Bali and other areas of Indonesia. We would also like to express our deep condolences with respect to the heavy loss of life and the casualties among innocent people. We strongly condemn such violent acts.

I would like to put forward China's views on the prevention of the weaponization of outer space and of an arms race in outer space. One of mankind's greatest achievements in the twentieth century was the opening of a new frontier in outer space. Not only has its 1,000-year-old dream of space travel come true, but the quality of life has also been much improved by the new environment and unlimited resources provided by outer space. Industries related to global satellite remote sensing, telecommunication, navigation and global positioning are booming, with annual revenues reaching billions of dollars. Meteorological and geosurvey satellites are playing an important role in reducing or preventing natural disasters. Meanwhile, material and life science research in the space environment has a promising future. Outer space has already become a part of modern human civilization. In the twenty-first century, the importance of outer space to humanity will further increase.

However, while sharing the fruits of the peaceful uses of outer space and yearning for a better future, we are facing a series of great challenges. Research and development on space weapons and the unveiling of space combat theories, just to name a few issues, clearly indicate that outer space is facing an increasing danger of weaponization and an arms race. If the trend is not reversed, countries will soon be compelled to take measures to protect the security of their space assets and relevant ground facilities.

The peaceful use of outer space will also be more costly. Vulnerable satellites and manned spaceships will have to orbit a weaponized space, full of weapon debris. Efforts for peaceful uses of outer space will be slowed and fruitful achievements endangered. Future generations will have to live under a sword of Damocles and pay a high price in dealing with the non-proliferation, disarmament or reduction of outer space weapons.

Over the years, the international community has realized the severe consequences of the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space and has made unremitting efforts to codify and improve relevant international legal regimes as well as to regulate activities of States in outer space. We subsequently saw the conclusion of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space and the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, all of which have played a positive role in preventing the weaponization of outer space in recent decades by stopping the introduction of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in outer space. Nevertheless, with the rapid development of space technology for military purposes, the shortcomings and loopholes of those legal instruments in relation to the prohibition of the deployment of weapons other than weapons of mass destruction and the use or threat of force against outer space objects have been gradually revealed as the weaponization of outer space increases. It has become clear that those instruments are not up to the task. It has been important for the international community to negotiate and conclude a legal instrument to halt the negative slide towards the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space.

As an important international arms control and disarmament forum, the First Committee has adopted more than 20 draft resolutions on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In recent years, these draft resolutions have been adopted without negative votes. This clearly shows the paramount importance that the international community attaches to this issue and reflects the political will to address it. This year China will again sponsor the relevant draft resolution (A/C.1/57/L.30).

However, there is still a lack of progress in the implementation of these resolutions. It is particularly regrettable that, as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body, the Conference on Disarmament has yet to conduct substantive work on this subject, as requested by the relevant General Assembly resolutions. The international community has devoted much attention to finding ways to break the current stalemate on this item. We call on the international community to continue to focus on this important issue and to redouble its efforts to achieve a solution.

All along, China has advocated the use of outer space solely for peaceful purposes and has committed

itself to the common endeavour of preventing the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space. We believe that the relevant General Assembly resolutions should be implemented and that the Conference on Disarmament has the primary role in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement or agreements, as appropriate, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects.

In June of this year, China and the Russian Federation, together with Belarus, Indonesia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe, jointly submitted to the Conference on Disarmament a working paper entitled "Possible elements for a future international legal agreement on the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space, the threat or use of force against other space objects" (CD/1679). The paper lays out our preliminary views on the general framework of such a legal instrument on outer space. The working paper has been circulated as an official document of the current session of the General Assembly (A/57/418).

In our view, in order to prevent the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space, the following basic obligations should be established as laid out in that document: not to place in orbit around the Earth any object carrying any kind of weapons, not to install such weapons on celestial bodies, or not to station such weapons in outer space in any other manner; not to resort to the threat or use of force against outer space objects; not to assist or encourage other States, groups of States or international organizations to participate in activities prohibited by the treaty. It should be pointed out that the aim of submitting this working paper is to implement resolutions on this item and to attain the goal of preventing the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space through multilateral cooperation. We are pleased to note that there exists a broad common understanding on this objective. We are open to constructive comments and amendments, so as to further develop and improve the document.

Using outer space for peaceful purposes reflects the common will and fundamental interests of the international community. Preventing the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space is in the interest of all countries and should be our common responsibility. Let us get the process under way by displaying political will and determination and striving for the early negotiation and conclusion of a legally binding international instrument on the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space and of the use of or threat of force against other outer space objects. We owe it to our future generations to keep space free from weapons and wars. Now we all should make a new contribution to that end.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Italy, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.6.

Mr. Maiolini (Italy): At the outset, Sir, I would like to express on behalf of the Italian delegation our congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of this important Committee. We will support you in your endeavours and in your initiatives.

Allow me also to express the grief and condolences of the Italian Government with respect to the events in Indonesia.

As the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission for it 2002 session and on behalf of the other sponsors, which are traditionally members of the expanded Bureau of the Commission, it is my distinct pleasure to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.6, entitled "Report of the Disarmament Commission". The draft resolution is a result of open-ended informal consultations among members of the Disarmament Commission. It has been prepared in a manner similar to that of previous resolutions regarding the Disarmament Commission, with appropriate changes in the text as this year's circumstances warranted. Those circumstances are well known to delegations, and I will not dwell on them. During the 2002 session, the Commission continued to be seized of two agenda items, both in their third year of consideration: ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament; and practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms. Accordingly, paragraph 5 reflects the present agenda of the Commission.

As delegations will remember, by resolution 56/26 A, dated 29 November 2001, the Commission was requested to hold sessions for a period not exceeding three weeks, in accordance with the 1998 decision on rationalization of the work of the Commission (decision 52/492). The 2000 session of the Disarmament Commission was reduced to two weeks due to the unusually busy disarmament calendar of that year. The 2001 substantive session was the first and only full three-week session held in accordance with the above-mentioned decision. At its 2002 session, due to extraordinary circumstances, the Commission decided to continue consideration of the two agenda

items at its next substantive session in 2003, from 31 March to 17 April. The present draft resolution, in its paragraph 6, reaffirms the normal practice of having a three-week substantive session of the Commission for 2003.

Now, allow me to say a few words about the activities of the Commission this year. As I mentioned earlier, the Commission held two organizational meetings and no substantive session. However, the Commission requested the Chairpersons of the two Working Groups to continue their intersessional consultations based on the discussions, suggestions and oral and written proposals and materials submitted during the previous two years of deliberations. The Commission also requested the two Chairpersons, if possible, to submit revised versions of their papers.

Let me say that it is not an easy task to try to maintain the perfect balance of deferring interests on issues, which go to the core of the security concepts. I am pleased to point out to the First Committee that during the two previous years, both Chairpersons met the challenge and presented papers which are considered a good basis for the final stages of further negotiations. I want to inform delegations that both Chairpersons are planning to conduct a series of consultations in the very near future.

In that context I would be remiss if I did not express my gratitude to both Chairpersons for their valiant efforts. I wish also to express my hope that delegations will actively participate in those upcoming intersessional consultations and that they will make constructive contributions to them. I believe that I speak on behalf of all delegations when I express guarded optimism as to the future success of the Commission's deliberations during the forthcoming 2003 session. The previous session has laid down a solid foundation which makes the further consensus-building process focused and more target-oriented.

I hope that draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.6 will enjoy consensus support, as similar texts have in previous years.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Mexico, who will introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/57/L.4 and L.20 and draft decision A/C.1/57/L.19.

Mr. Albin Santos (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the sponsors of A/C.1/57/L.4, entitled "Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty". The sponsors, as of today, are Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Fiji, France, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, Nauru, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom, Uruguay and Venezuela.

We have asked the Secretariat to issue a revised version of the draft to correct an unintentional omission: in the first preambular paragraph the words "or any other nuclear explosions" should be added after the words "test explosions". The point is to ensure consistency with article I of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

The adoption of the Treaty six years ago was a reflection of the international community's clear recognition of the danger posed by nuclear tests. Completely banning them by impeding the development and qualitative improvement of new weapons is a step that significantly promotes international security and another step towards achieving nuclear disarmament. As members will note, the preamble reiterates the importance of the cessation of testing, recalls the adoption of the Treaty in 1996 and stresses the importance of achieving universality for this instrument. Even though the process of entry into force has been slower than we should have liked, the draft resolution indicates that the Assembly is encouraged by the progress made to date. It recalls as well resolution 55/41, adopted in 2000, and it welcomes the Final Declaration of the 2001 Conference on Measures to Facilitate the Entry into Force of the Treaty.

In the operative portion the draft stresses the importance and urgency of achieving the Treaty's entry into force. It welcomes contributions to the work of the Preparatory Committee. It urges States to maintain their moratoriums pending the entry into force of the Treaty. It urges all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty and to refrain from acts that would defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty, and in any event to assign high priority to this issue.

The sponsors trust that this draft resolution will send a clear-cut message from the United Nations about the Treaty and the importance of its early entry into force. We therefore hope that it will be adopted by a sweeping majority.

I turn now to draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.20, entitled "United Nations Disarmament Information Programme", which I am introducing on behalf of the following sponsors: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines and South Africa. In its preambular part the text recalls the launching in 1982 of the World Disarmament Campaign and resolution 47/53 D of 1992, whereby it was decided that the Campaign should be known as the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme. The text refers to past resolutions on this item and to the report of the Secretary-General (A/57/223 and Add.1). In its operative part, the text takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General and commends the Secretary-General for his efforts to make effective use of the limited resources available, stresses the importance of the Programme and notes with appreciation the cooperation of the Department of Public Information. The text also puts forward recommendations for future work, invites Member States to make contributions to the Trust Fund and takes note of the recommendations made in the study on disarmament and non-proliferation education. As members will recall, a specific draft resolution on the latter item is contained in document A/C.1/57/L.7, which was introduced last week by Under-Secretary Miguel Marin-Bosch of Mexico. Finally, draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.20 requests the Secretary-General to report on implementation of the activities of the Programme at the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly and thus decides to include this item in the provisional agenda of the fifty-ninth session.

In the past, the Programme has had the backing of all the members of the Committee. The sponsors therefore trust that this draft resolution will enjoy general support and will therefore be adopted without a vote.

The delegation of Mexico would like finally to introduce draft decision A/C.1/57/L.19. It is self-explanatory. Our heads of State or Government have declared themselves in favour of convening a United Nations conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers in the context of nuclear disarmament. The delegation of Mexico has come to the conclusion that further consultations need to be held on this initiative and is therefore submitting this draft decision, by which the item would be included in the provisional agenda of the fifty-eighth session.

The Chairman: I call now on the representative of Malaysia, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.53.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation is pleased to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.53, dated 10 October 2002, entitled "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*". The draft resolution is sponsored by the following delegations: Algeria, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cambodia, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Qatar, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, the Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Thailand, Tonga, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zambia and my own delegation, Malaysia. My delegation expresses its gratitude to all the sponsors, as well as those delegations that may later decide to sponsor or support the draft resolution.

This draft resolution is an updated version of the resolution adopted at the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly: 15 out of its 17 preambular and four operative paragraphs are identical to those of resolution 56/24 S of 29 November 2001. The first word in the sixth preambular paragraph has been changed from "Welcoming" to "Emphasizing". We are of the view that it would be more appropriate for the unequivocal undertaking made in 2000 by States parties at the NPT Review Conference to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament be emphasized this year, as the Assembly had already welcomed it last year.

We have introduced two new preambular paragraphs, namely the ninth and fourteenth, to reflect important developments that have taken place since last year. The ninth preambular paragraph refers to the

signing by the United States of America and the Russian Federation of the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, better known as the Moscow Treaty, following the demise of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. We have taken note of the fact that the two major nuclear Powers have agreed to reduce the number of deployed intercontinental-range nuclear warheads to between 1,700 and 2,200 for each country, from about 6,000. At the same time, we reiterate that this reduction could be complemented by further efforts on their part to ensure irreversibility.

Another important development was the convening in April of the first Preparatory Committee of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). At the time that meeting was held, we learned of developments that could harm the commitment made by the nuclear-weapon States at the 2000 Review Conference to implement article VI of the NPT. The 13 practical steps for the systematic and progressive effort to implement article VI of the NPT are vital to move the process forward towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Further developments that occurred after the holding of the Preparatory Committee meeting confirmed our concerns about the lack of progress in the implementation of the 13 steps. That sentiment was widely shared by delegates during the general debate in this Committee. In that regard, we believe that the fourteenth preambular paragraph summarizes the view of the international community concerning the implementation of those important 13 steps. It is our earnest hope that the commitments made at the 2000 Review Conference will continue to be honoured.

With regard to the operative paragraphs, we have retained the previous formulation, as we feel that the objectives of the paragraphs remain the cornerstone of the thrust of this resolution.

Operative paragraph 1

> "Underlines once again the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control".

In paragraph 2, we have omitted reference to a specific time or year for the commencement of multilateral negotiations leading to an early conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention — without, however, compromising on the need for the prompt or immediate commencement of those negotiations. We believe that the responsibility of States to take action to reduce and eliminate nuclear threats posed by the existence of nuclear weapons is an immediate and urgent one, as reflected in this paragraph. Paragraph 2 now reads:

> "Calls once again upon all States immediately to fulfil that obligation by commencing multilateral negotiations leading to an early conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention prohibiting the development, production, testing, deployment, stockpiling, transfer, threat or use of nuclear weapons and providing for their elimination".

Paragraphs 3 and 4 remain the same as those of resolution 56/24 S. Paragraph 3 requests the Secretary-General to apprise the General Assembly of information that he has received from States of the efforts and measures they have taken on the implementation of the resolution and nuclear disarmament, and paragraph 4 decides to include the item in the provisional agenda of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

The draft resolution does not pretend that paragraph 1 sets out the only conclusion of the Court that could influence disarmament policy or that there are no other actions that could be taken in the light of the Court's decision. The conclusion of the 1996 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice clearly stated that States parties to the NPT have a legal obligation not only to pursue negotiations but also to bring them to an early conclusion. That is consistent with the solemn obligation undertaken by States parties under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to pursue in good faith negotiations on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament and to engage in a determined pursuit of systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, the ultimate goal being the elimination of those weapons.

The sponsors of the draft resolution consider the unanimous opinion of the world Court on the existence of this obligation as a clear basis for follow-up action by States Members of the United Nations in their determined efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons. The unanimous decision of the International Court of Justice, representing the full weight of the legal opinion of all members of the world Court, is an

important contribution to the development of international law, which should not be summarily dismissed. The Court, in arriving at its unanimous decision that Member States have an obligation not only to conduct but also successfully to conclude negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament, reiterates the obligation of States parties under article VI of the NPT.

In view of the many recent setbacks in the field of nuclear disarmament, the challenge facing the international community with respect to the realization of a nuclear-weapon-free world remains a formidable one, requiring our total and unqualified commitment to the goals that we set ourselves. Our final goal must remain the elimination of all of these weapons within a time frame that is foreseeable, realistic and attainable, if the political will exists among the nuclear-weapon States. Towards that end, nuclear disarmament must remain a high-priority issue on the global agenda.

In submitting this draft resolution for the consideration of Member States, my delegation is confident that it will continue to receive the support of a large majority of Member States. We trust that States that support multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament that will eventually lead to the total elimination of nuclear weapons, as we are committed to, will have no reason to oppose this draft resolution, which seeks to do exactly that in the long term. Once again, in introducing this draft resolution, my delegation expresses its sincere appreciation to the other sponsors as well as to delegations that will vote in favour.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Egypt, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.30.

Mr. Abu Zeid (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is a pleasure for me to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.30 entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". I do so on behalf of the following countries, all of which are sponsors of the draft resolution: Algeria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mali, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, the Sudan and Zambia.

The draft resolution before the Committee this year differs little in substance from the similar resolution adopted by the General Assembly at the fifty-sixth session (resolution 56/23). This text sets out in its preamble the fundamentals of the legal framework for the peaceful exploration and use of outer space by all States in a manner that can provide States and their peoples with the prosperity they seek, without harm to their economic or scientific development, and in a spirit of respect by all States for the principles of the United Nations Charter. There is reference also to the obligation to renounce the use or threat of use of force and to prevent an arms race in outer space. The preamble emphasizes international efforts within the framework of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space and in the Conference on Disarmament, and emphasizes the importance of strengthening international efforts to conclude bilateral and multilateral agreements to that end. Moreover, the draft resolution calls for greater transparency regarding the peaceful use of outer space.

In the operative part, stress is placed on the need to strengthen negotiations to prevent an arms race in outer space. The text stresses the need to reinforce the legal regime and international law regarding the use of outer space, since the present provisions alone are not sufficient to prevent an arms race in outer space. The draft resolution calls upon States involved in the use of outer space to refrain from actions contrary to that objective. It invites the Conference on Disarmament to update the mandate contained in its decision of 13 February 1992 and to establish an ad hoc committee as early as possible during its 2003 session.

In submitting this draft resolution jointly with Sri Lanka, Egypt would like to state that it would have been impossible for my delegation to introduce this text without the intensive efforts made by the delegation of Sri Lanka throughout the past year in the First Committee and, with the most valuable assistance of Ambassador Prasad Kariyawasam, in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

The Chairman: I now give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): I would like to inform the Committee that the following Member States have become sponsors of the following draft resolutions: draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.4, Monaco; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.7, Monaco; draft

resolution A/C.1/57/L.25, Monaco, Mozambique and Nauru; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.30, Democratic People's Republic of Korea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.34, Bangladesh, Papua New Guinea and Senegal; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.35, Bangladesh and the Republic of Korea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.36, Nauru and Papua New Guinea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.37, Bangladesh and Papua New Guinea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.38, Guinea, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Senegal and Sierra Leone; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.40, Nauru and Papua New Guinea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.41, Italy; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.43, Nauru and Papua New Guinea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.44, Nauru and Senegal; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.45, Papua New Guinea, Togo and Ukraine; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.46, Nauru and the Republic of Korea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.49, Georgia and Papua New Guinea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.50, Bangladesh; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.51, Bangladesh, Nauru and Papua New Guinea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.52, Papua New Guinea; and draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.53, Bangladesh and Papua New Guinea.

Organization of work

The Chairman: I would like to inform members that this year a total of two draft decisions and 52 draft resolutions have been submitted to the Committee for its consideration under various items. In accordance with the Committee's programme of work and timetable, the Committee will start taking action on these draft resolutions and decisions on Monday, 21 October 2002. A total of 10 meetings have been allocated for this next stage of our work, which will last until Tuesday, 29 October 2002.

In this connection, members will recall that at the organizational meeting of the First Committee I stated that I would follow the useful device of clustering draft resolutions, which has been evolved over the course of the past few years. It is my intention therefore to provide the Committee as soon as possible with a paper grouping together the draft resolutions in several clusters, with a view to facilitating the task of the Committee during the final stage, when it takes action on draft resolutions.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.